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Ecological Spirituality: Its History and Meaning

Donald P. St. John

This paper is an attempt to develop an understanding of ecological spirituality based on the vision of Thomas Berry. I use the term vision deliberately for throughout his writings Berry is weaving a new view of the universe and of human existence. This vision grows out of a lifetime of study and reflection on the cultural and religious traditions of humanity as well as twenty years of study of the social and natural sciences informed by the synthetic visions of Carl Jung and Teilhard de Chardin.

Unlike some rather narrow and simplistic ecological thinkers of today, Berry is a complex dialectical thinker. His creative and fruitful insights come from his ability to recognize the deeper truths in often conflicting positions. He severely criticizes anthropocentrism yet has a profound appreciation for the human; he emphasizes the need for a vision of the future yet spends much of his time explaining the past; he chides western religion for being stuck in an outmoded view yet calls the experience of the numinous or sacred essential for shaping the future; he criticizes as narrow and unimaginative the era of science and technology yet claims that through science a new religious revelation has broken in on humanity; he emphasizes the interdependent processive quality of reality yet holds as sacred and irreplaceable the identity of each individual being; he claims that humans are only a part of a larger whole yet raises the human to a dimension of the universe.

Berry is, in short, a microcosm of the emerging global ecological community that he so loves to conjure up. In him is all the diversity, ambiguity and wholeness of such an order with a touch of humor as well as rhetorical flair.

While my understanding of both ecology and spirituality will become apparent in the course of this paper, a few distinctions are necessary at the beginning.

The term spirituality is most frequently used today in a religious context where it refers to the inner life or spirit of a religious community in contrast

to its organizational structure. On the individual level it refers to the inner life of the person who is transformed by contact with the religious Reality indicated by the scriptures, rituals, myths, symbols and beliefs of the community.

A secondary use of spirituality is topological, cutting across traditions. Thus one can speak of an ecstatic, contemplative, devotional or sacramental spirituality.

My use of the term spirituality includes but goes beyond these common usages. Their problematic status arises from their human-centeredness. To indicate a more cosmic- and eco-centered paradigm I use the adjective "ecological." I am not proposing a new religion (the Church of Ecology) nor a new type of spirituality (not ecstatic but cosmic!).

What I am proposing, though, is that we stop strutting about as if the spiritual life of the universe were somehow concentrated the human boullion cube. What I am proposing is that the roots of our spiritual life go back to the primordial atoms that emerged from the great fireball fifteen billion years ago, and that its ensuing journey is our own fundamental spiritual journey.

What I am proposing is that the earth constitutes the primary symbol system, the primary scripture, the primary sacrament, the primary myth and ritual which embody, reveal and mediate the numinous mystery through and in which all comes to be and on which the creative process relies. Through the earth's spirituality, the human species receives its basic spiritual orientation, its ecological spirituality.

We are earthlings, you and I. This sacred planet is our home and our heritage, our past and our future. We bear the unmistakable imprint of its evolution and structure.

Seen from a cosmic perspective, the differences among us are minor in comparison to our identity as an earth species. Seen from a cosmic perspective, our relatedness to and dependence on the biosphere is profound. Seen from a cosmic perspective, the earth as a whole is a living organism. Seen from the depths of our spiritual traditions, the earth is a biospiritual being. The spirituality of this planet distinguishes the earth from all other planets in the universe. In its one spiritual life are united the spiritualities of millions of beings, from microorganisms to whales from cellular systems to ecosystems, from individuals to communities, from bioregions to the global community.

We have expressed our basic eco-spirituality in many cultures and in many ways. And yet, now, when we stand in need of expressing it on a global

level, we find ourselves blocked on all sides by our destructive processes and confused as to what might constitute a globally functional spirituality. We need the assistance of the spirit of cultures past as well as from the earth spirit if we are to have the resources to accomplish this task—the most important in human history.

ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY AND THE PAST

In the first part of this paper, I will focus on former cultural expressions of ecological spirituality. This is not an attempt to romanticize the past in order to critique the present but is a necessary discipline for the awakening of our own dormant spiritual energies in order to better envisage the future. One of the unfortunate byproducts of our modern obsession with change and "progress" in the scientific and technological fields is the easy application of these categories to cultural and spiritual matters. One would rightly be skeptical of a composer who refused to study the compositions of Bach because they were written 250 years ago and, therefore, must be outdated.

Furthermore it is simply a fact that Bach continues to have a profound impact on those who listen to his works with sensitivity. Bach no longer belongs to the eighteenth century nor to Europe but to the whole human family of all eras. Bach speaks to and transforms the perennial depths of the human spirit. Likewise, the notion that the spirituality of the Vedic peoples of ancient India has nothing to say to us today only reflects how much we need their wisdom. We are not talking about outmoded technologies but about abiding achievements of the human spirit. Especially in the area of ecological spirituality we "need to be open to what others have understood about humanity, nature and the divine."

What I am referring to is not primarily an increase in information, for we have more information today than we know what to do with. Spirituality does not grow like a building—by adding more and more floors—but by a paradoxical decrease in self and an increase in identity. Not the identity of the individual so much as the identity of humankind. The continued unfolding of this identity requires an infolding and remembering of the past—a past rooted ultimately in the earth, the galaxies and the primordial fireball. Paradoxically, the modern world has devoted tremendous time and energy to the study, recovery, and preservation of the past. This self-conscious restoration of the past is reflected in our libraries and museums as well as in the hillside and seaside preserves of ancient sites. A vast "army" of scholars pour over manuscripts and puzzle over cryptic stones. We all

are shocked at the wholesale destruction of cultural riches as has happened in Tibet.

That so many human beings should find intrinsic pleasure in such "useless" activity may point to its deep importance to the earth-human process. Somehow we realize that the cultural past deserves and demands a place in the future. And we also know that we need the past if we are to have a future. Beyond that, as Berry says, "there is the feeling that these things we ourselves have done in the past, even as these men of the past are doing now what we are doing."¹

As with any being or phase in the cosmic-earth process these peoples and cultures have both value in themselves and in their relation to the total process. Thus as they enter into the formation of the ecological age they experience a certain renewed vitality and creativity. Communion with the past will be of great importance to ecological spirituality because it must establish a matrix by which present and past spiritualities can find their universal dimension. Richness gained from diversity and inclusiveness is infinitely more desirable than illusory power gained from monolithic unity or exclusiveness. At least such is the way of the universe and the earth. Just as this way is a movement from simple to complex realities so is "the movement from simpler to the more complex cultural forms."²

There is a certain sequence to the larger cultural systems or codings which Berry identifies as the tribal-shamanic, the classic civilizational, the scientific-technological and the ecological.³

This sequence has not occurred uniform everywhere but serves to indicate certain similar developments that have occurred in major areas of the globe. Nor does the sequence indicate that there should be a total replacement of the earlier by the later. Many tribal cultures, in fact, continue to play an active part in the contemporary world and their uniqueness should be protected and fostered in the ecological age.

I shall investigate the ecological and cosmological wisdom that represent each level and point to the western cultural background of the scientific technological age.

TRIBAL-SHAMANIC PHASE

Regarding the tribal-shamanic phase, Berry notes that:

This was the period when the gods were born in human consciousness as expressions of those profound spiritual orientations that emerged from the earth process into man's unconscious depths, then as symbols into his con-

scious mind, and finally into visible expression. All that man has done since then has taken this same course.⁴

The tribal-shamanic phase is characterized by small hunting-gathering communities, living in close contact with their environment with division of labor usually along gender and age lines, and with a minimal technology. To set the context for this brief discussion of the ecological spirituality of the tribal-shamanic peoples, I shall draw upon the speech of Chief Seattle delivered in 1852 to the people of the United States as he signed a treaty surrendering his land. Chief Seattle understood deeply the spiritual issues at hand in the encounter of Native peoples with the Euro-American civilization. He saw the dangerous direction that civilization was heading vis-a-vis the earth. He saw how the religion of that culture for all of its splendid insights lacked a spiritual-moral sense for the earth and its creatures. And in some way he understood that he was addressing a future age, more sober in its evaluation of the achievements of that civilization and more willing to hear again voices that speak for the earth.

...Every part of the earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every meadow, every humming insect. All are holy in the memory and experience of my people. We know the sap which courses through the trees as we know the blood which courses through our veins. We are part of the earth and it is part of us. The perfumed flowers are our sisters. The bear, the deer, the great eagle, these are our brothers. The rocky crests, the juices in the meadow, the body heat of the pony, and man, belong to the same family.

The shining water that moves in the streams and rivers is not just water, but the blood of our ancestors. Each ghostly reflection in the clear waters of the lakes tells of events and memories in the life of my people. The water's murmur is the voice of my father's father.

The rivers are our brothers. They quench our thirst. They carry our canoes and feed our children. So you must give to the rivers the kindness you would give any brother...

This we know: the earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.

We love this earth as a newborn loves its mother's heartbeat. So, if we sell you our land, love it as we have loved it. Care for it as we have cared for it.

Hold in your mind the memory of the land as it is when you receive it.
Preserve the land for all children and love it, as God loves us all.

As we are part of the land, you too are part of the land.
This earth is precious to us. It is also precious to you.
One thing we know: there is only one God. No man, be
he Red Man, or White Man, can be apart. We *are*
brothers after all.⁵

In this eloquent passage one finds an expression of a spiritual orientation and value system that is held by most tribal peoples of North America, and, with some modifications, around the world.

This spirituality rests on the experience of the sacredness of all living and non-living components of the earth. An attitude of reverence and respect is the appropriate human response to this insight. What the Iroquoian people termed *orenda*, the Algonquians, *manitou* and the Plains tribes called *wakan* refers to this pervasive numinous presence.

Kinship terms were used to indicate that the human community was not the only "people" who inhabited the earth. Humans were considered a part of a larger earth community to whom affective and subjective as well as physical ties were maintained. In addition, each being—animals, plants, rivers, mountains, the sky with its beings and the land...had its inner source of power as well as its own outer functioning.

Through prayers, dances and rituals, communication with and evocation of these powers was achieved. Especially through dreams and visions the inner human spirit was guided and empowered for its daily struggles. Among Siberian, Eskimo and extreme northern peoples a holy person, the shaman, was charged with dream-vision journeys that brought back healing and guiding power to the people. The shaman knew the language of the animals as well as the inner structure of the cosmos.

In times of need, one turned to this deep interior world where cultural life was guided by the earth spirits. Throughout most regions of North America, the shamanic abilities of healing and divining were divided among specialists. However, the seeking of guidance and power in dreams and visions was open to everyone as was the search for a guardian spirit.⁶ Such individual practices validated the communal belief in and ritual relationship to the wider spiritual world.

Animals were treated with great respect, especially those which were hunted or which formed a special totem bond with a clan. Hunting as well as fishing activities were preceded by, conducted in accordance with, and followed by ritual. Furthermore certain species of animals had their own "guardian"

spirit who watched after their welfare much as a parent, chief or god watched after its charges. It was not primarily human skill that determined success in the hunt but the willingness of the animal to give of itself to the cycle of life and death.⁷

Chief Seattle portrays a people not only in touch with the earth but with its human ancestors. In fact the link with the ancestors is through the earth. The earth like a mother gives life, sustains life, and takes life back into her fruitful depths to be transformed.

Lastly, it was very apparent to Chief Seattle and other Native Americans that the destruction of the earth would be our own destruction. Not just economically but spiritually.

RELIGIOUS CIVILIZATIONAL PHASE: THE INDO-EUROPEANS

The nomadic hunting-gathering mode of life gave way circa 10,000 B.C. to Neolithic settlements in Anatolia, Iran and Jordan around river systems. Women invented agriculture and women's mysteries formed the symbolic nexus of this era. The Great Goddess reigned over fertility and the earth. This peaceful Neolithic period spread gradually throughout the Middle East, North and West Africa, Scandinavia, Britain and Spain. In the Near East, city centers arose circa 5,000-4,000 B.C.

Around this time the Indo-European hordes swept across Europe, the Near East, Central Asia and finally into northern India. They gradually settled down and established more male-centered civilizations. Yet they also incorporated into their symbol system, especially in the Middle East, the goddess. Sexual symbolism centered on hierogamy and human sexuality was seen as a participation in the sexual energies of the natural world.

While the domination phase of this civilizational movement was one of great violence and confusion, the efforts to construct a new order demanded great cultural creativity. The goddess symbolism provided some of it as well new visionaries, poets, and holy seers, both male and female. Later, many of the submerged indigenous traditions, notably in India, began to reassert themselves.

The ancient religious scriptures of India, the *Vedas*, reflect the symbolic universe of the early Aryan civilization. The *rishis* or seers were the purported mediums for this source of cosmic wisdom. That these scriptures did not have an "author," human or divine, reflects the belief that they emanated from the deepest level of cosmic-human existence. This ancient

civilization still operated in a universe where there was no perceived alienation of the human from the cosmic order.

The *Rig Veda*, the earliest collection of Vedic hymns vibrates with creation's energies:

Participating in this creation, the seers found words, rhythms, and melodies with the power to open the human heart, mind, and feelings to these same vibrant world creating energies. Through the liturgy of sacrificial celebration, these mantric sounds, melodies, and rhythms allowed the Vedic people to join in the process of cosmic creation—particularly self-creation and the creation of the community.⁸

This turning to the deeper creative energies linking the cosmic and human orders by these ancient seers reflects the older shamanic tradition and, indeed, as we shall see, is essential to our own era. One of the deep symbols which expressed this integral universe of the Indo-European peoples was that of the Cosmic Person. One finds variants of this myth-symbol in Indic, Iranian, Germanic, Slavic and Celtic texts. It influenced symbolic developments in Christianity, in the Hermetic traditions and in later more consciously literary compositions, as well as provided the structure for much of western philosophical and scientific thought.

The text I shall use as an example of Cosmic Person myth and symbolism is taken from the *Rig Veda* (x.90):

Thousand-headed Purusha, thousand-eyed, thousand-footed—he, having pervaded the earth on all sides, still extends ten fingers beyond it...

When the gods performed the sacrifice with Purusha as the oblation, then the spring was its clarified butter, the summer the sacrificial fuel, and the autumn the oblation.

From that wholly offered sacrificial oblation were born the verses and the sacred chants...the meters...the sacrificial formula.

From it horses were born and also those animals who have double rows [i.e., upper and lower] of teeth; cows were born from it, from it were born goats and sheep.

When they divided Purusha, in how many different portions did they arrange him? What became of his mouth, what of his two arms? What were his two thighs and his two feet called?

His mouth became the brahman; his two arms were made into the *rajan*.

His two thighs became the *vaishyas*

from his two feet the shudra was born.

The moon was born from the mind, from the eye the sun was born; from the mouth

Indra and Agni, from the breath [prana] the wind (vatu) was born.

From the navel was the atmosphere created, from the head the heaven issued forth; from the two feet was born the earth and the quarters...from the ears. Thus did they fashion the worlds...

With this sacrificial oblation did the gods offer the sacrifice. These were the first norms [dharma] of sacrifice...⁹

This myth reflects the common three-tiered universe of the Indo-Europeans: the heavens, the atmosphere and the earth. Likewise, it expresses the common three-tiered hierarchical society adding the Indian lowest class, the *shudras* (slaves, serfs.)

The basis for this integrated order is the human body in its macrocosmic form. To signify the fact that the cosmic and human are alloforms (alternate forms) of the same reality, the Indo-Europeans constructed an elaborate set of homologies, such as: heaven/head, moon/mind, sun/eye, cardinal directions/ear, cloud/thought, atmosphere or air/navel or breath, earth/flesh or feet, mountains or stones/bones, water (rivers, dew)/blood or other fluids, grass or trees/hair or nerves.¹⁰

In many of the creation myths the Cosmic Person or its animal substitute (horse, cow), is dismembered to form the macrocosm.

Bruce Lincoln in his excellent work on the ancient Indo-European tradition, schematizes its basic creation story:

Creation results from

I. The death...

II. and dismemberment...

III. of a Primordial Being...

IV. and the formation of the universe—or some significant portion thereof from the pieces of the victim's body

A. the physical universe...

B. the social universe...

C. other specialized items...¹¹

This initial phase of dismemberment is followed in many myths by an act of reconstruction by which the first human being was formed. Thus the microcosm recapitulates the macrocosm and carries within it the energies and structure of the universe. Humans come out of the universe and stand as an image of it.

The power of such a symbol in expressing a basic religious experience was not easily forsaken as an Old Irish Christian Text from the fourteenth or fifteenth century testifies:

There is this to be known concerning the creation of Adam: (he was made) from seven parts...The part of earth that is the body of a man. The part of the sea, that is the blood of a man. The part of the sun in his face and countenance; the part of cloud, his thought. The part of wind, the breath of man; the part of stones, his bones; the part of the Holy Spirit, his soul.¹²

Symbolism of dismemberment is, of course, closely linked with the ritual of sacrifice. The nature of the victim varied from region to region but included humans, domesticated animals, milk products, and intoxicants.¹³

In addition to its personal and social functions, sacrifice was central to the functioning of the cosmos. The origin myth depicted the powerful events that founded and energized the universe in order that they be made present here and now. Every sacrificial ritual was a re-creation of the cosmos, an assurance that it would not fall into decay or entropy. Through the breaking apart of the microcosmic reality which had received its being and form from the macrocosmic form, the latter was restored and renewed.¹⁴

A cycle of death and regeneration linked microcosm and macrocosm. One can see how agricultural activities helped to give insight into the mysterious cycle of life and death. Humans were not long in recognizing the implications for their own existence.

Seed that is planted and watered ordinarily comes to birth as grain of the same sort that produced the seed in the first place. Grain comes from the earth and returns to the earth, only to spring forth again in a never-ending cycle. And if the body is compared to grain, we anticipate a similar cycle of bodily death and rebirth.¹⁵

Death also is a form of sacrifice and hence has the potential to bring about regeneration. The myth of the dying-and-rising god of the Middle East links the agricultural cycle with the divine energies. Agriculture "reveals" a basic structure of reality itself which includes the divine and human.

This tradition finds a more "historical" mode in ancient Persian texts which influence the biblical Intertestamental and Christian texts. Bodily death turns to resurrection at the eschatological end of history and the present cosmic cycle. The human body which was dispersed to the cosmos is reassembled from elements of the cosmos.

Hence one comes full circle in the larger Indo-European creation myth. The Supreme Person is dismembered to form the macrocosm which is reassembled to form the human microcosmic body which through death or sacrifice disperses to the cosmos which in its death creates the eschatological condition.

In the Christian tradition God becomes human in Jesus Christ, being emptied of self. The God-Human to whom all humanity is joined is "sacrificed" and is raised, thereby revealing and anticipating the eschatological reality. By the symbolic reenactment of this mystery, the Catholic and Orthodox liturgies make present the power of that death and resurrection. Christians hope for a final resurrection and reassembling of their bodily and personal existences on the eschaton.

The myths and rituals of ancient civilizations did more than integrate the microcosm with the macrocosm. They served to legitimate the sociopolitical hierarchy of the mesocosm. This is quite clear in the earlier Vedic myth. There the traditional three-levelled social hierarchy of the Indo-Europeans (priests, warriors, peasants) rests on a fourth class, the sudra or slave class. The latter were the dark-skinned indigenous people of India whom the light-skinned Aryans had conquered.

Priests functioned as ideological defenders and perpetuators of this society. Their social function, however, does not detract from the brilliance of their symbol systems or the profundity of their cosmology. One suspects that they perceived of their role as essential to the maintenance of the cosmos as well as of society.

Yet their sacrifices did not create new crops out of air nor were their own food and luxuries the result of their own labor. The aristocrats lived from taxes and booty, some of which paid for sacrifices that would assure more wealth and power. Gradually commoners and women were even excluded from observing the sacrificial rituals. Only the rich could afford the more important ones.¹⁶

Fortunately neither the creative imagination stimulated by this new universe nor the excluded groups could long be contained by a system growing more ritualistic and rigid. Reform and alternative movements sprung up all over the ancient world beginning roughly around 600 B.C. Reasons varied: discontent with the official cult, disillusionment with the violence of these warrior states, a thirst for deeper personal realization, the rise of philosophy and the first sciences.

In addition to bringing about reforms in the worldview these movements provided a more intense spiritual and more profound intellectual life. The

gradual integration of the reforms into a new cultural system reached a fulfillment in the great Medieval civilizations around the globe. These new movements have also provided us with the major world religions. While the movements did not do away with hierarchy and, even, in some cases, spawned new ones, they did open up the spiritual life in the great civilizations to more people and introduced a critical capacity though philosophical and theological schools of thought.

Their contribution to the achievement of an ecological spirituality global in scope is essential both because of their needed cooperation and because of the wisdom their spiritualities embody concerning the human-earth relationship. One example is the rise of mysticism in India.

India of the sixth century B.C., was filled with wandering ascetics and philosophers as well as hermit priests dwelling in forests. It was a time of great questioning and great suffering (the two frequently go together). Some of the answers gave rise to Buddhism, Jainism, Yoga and the mystical teachings of the Vedic *Upanishads*.

These radical shifts to the interior numinous depths of the human signal the rise of a mystical philosophy and way of life. The mystic transcends the symbolic imaginative universe. The *Urgrund* of existential and phenomenal existence is reached wherein prayers and rituals that would mediate the individual and cosmic spirit are no longer necessary. The ineffable can be approached either in a positive way through the diaphanous world or in a negative way by rejecting all forms and limited realities.

One could say that the Cosmic Person is individually realized. The result of this deep realization is a sense of unity with all beings. The spiritual detachment needed to shatter the self-centered and anthropocentric grasp on reality ends in a reappropriation of all things in a new paradisaal manner. In an historical context one can see the task of our age as a shattering of our anthropocentrism and the achieving of a new ecocentric or cosmocentric life.

THE CHINESE WORLD

The Chinese world went through a period of great turmoil and upheaval in the last half of the first millennium, B.C. The previous Shang and early Chou dynasties developed an elaborate sacrificial system as well as a system of homologies and correspondence similar to the Indo-European tradition. During the emergence of Imperial China in the first millennium A.D. this system again flourished in a modified form centered on the bureaucratic structure of China.

During the chaotic transition period great visionaries, especially of the Confucianist and Taoist schools, laid China's spiritual-philosophical foundations. This bloody period so shook the Chinese experience that its basic answers about society, human nature, and the universe shaped the future of Chinese thought.

The achievements of Confucius and his school were profound. Confucius extended the magico-religious influence of ritual in bringing order and power into society. *Li* or ritual was extended to include all of the "rituals" of life from table manners to international diplomacy, from family relationships to ancestor veneration. Along with this humanization of ritual Confucius broadened the arena of the influence of virtue or *te*. Originally a magical power exuded by the emperor when aligning himself with the cosmic powers, *te* became a distinctly moral concept. Rule by moral example was to replace rule by force and all human beings not just the aristocracy were encouraged to develop their moral character. The moral regulation of society was to reflect and be in harmony with the moral order of the universe. The human way (*tao*) while in harmony to the way of heaven (*tao t'ien*) had its own rites, rituals and hierarchical structure.

The goal of human cultivation or spirituality was so to interiorize the human way manifest in society and present within human nature that one would practice the virtues spontaneously. *Jen*, goodness or humaneness, was now a general human goal and not just that of the gentry. Confucius had such a deep regard for the positive influences in the human that the development of one's humanity (*jen*) was seen as almost limitless.¹⁷

Mencius and later Neo-Confucianists sought for the source of this tendency and its ultimate expression in humankind's ontological unity with the universe or heaven (*t'ien*). The human was seen as a dimension of all of reality, the *hsin* (mind-heart or feeling-awareness) of the universe. The Confucian experience of the affective qualities and moral dimension of the universe shapes its expression of the Cosmic Person symbol.

This human feeling for the larger order is beautifully portrayed in the Neo-Confucianist, Wang Yang-Ming:

The great man regards Heaven and earth and the myriad things as one Body. He regards the world as one family and the country as one person. As to those who make a cleavage between objects and distinguishes between the self and others, they are small men. That the great man can regard Heaven, earth, and the myriad things as one body is not because he deliberately wants to do so, but be-

cause it is natural with the humane nature of his mind that he should form a unity with Heaven, earth, and the myriad things.... Everything from ruler, minister, husband, wife, and friends to mountains, rivers, heavenly and earthly spirits, birds, animals, and plants, all should be truly loved in order to realize my humanity that forms unity, and...one body with Heaven, earth and the myriad things.¹⁸

Taoism formed a complementary pole to Confucianism in the Chinese mind. For Taoism, the problem of disorder and anarchy in human society was to be solved by a return to the spontaneous order found in nature.¹⁹ Taoism was suspect of the whole civilizational program seeing it as an arrogant attempt of humans to impose their will and concepts onto nature. One was to avoid the temptation of moral, aesthetic and intellectual judgments based on the program and tastes of the elites ruling society. These judgments were arbitrary, unnecessary and counter-productive. Definitions of the good gave rise to evil, of the beautiful gave rise to the ugly, of the true gave rise to the false. Such a program only produced further conflict and tension.

Rather one should return to the pre-conceptual level of the mind which resembled that of the child, to the pre-civilizational level of society which resembled that of nature. The great Tao, a feminine concept that countered the masculine patriarchal concept, achieved wondrous things through effortless action (*wu wei*). Taoism advised constant contact with the feminine, creative dimension of the heart-mind and thus of the universe. While resembling the global phenomenon of mysticism, Taoism kept the unique Chinese love of the concrete and its appreciation of the temporal cycles and complementary polarities.

Taoism inspired the great nature poetry and landscape painting of China. Taoist philosophy helped change Buddhism so as to be effective in East Asia. *Ch'an* (Zen Buddhism) is a unique contribution to world spirituality, past and present.

In the Sinitic tradition, as Professor Hwa Yol Jung illustrates in his paper, we have a significant model for ecological spirituality. This spirituality takes into consideration both the value and uniqueness of Confucian human-to-human relationships (Homopiety) while also including the Taoist-Zen human-to-nature relationships (Geopiety).

CULTURAL FACTORS IN THE SCIENTIFIC-TECHNOLOGICAL AGE

In the Middle East, in the eighth century B.C.E., the prophetic tradition emerged. Unlike priests who mediated the numinous power through rituals, the prophets brought moral teachings and messages directly from the deity and aimed at the religio-political order. This prophetic tradition finds its most eloquent and powerful spokespersons in the Hebrew prophets and later in Jesus of Nazareth and Muhammad. Prophetism holds the human order responsible to the moral dictates of a transcendent supreme being who also has established his sovereignty over the "laws" and patterns of the natural world, or, creation. The human moral order, operating within a history of human relationship with the divine, directs human existence toward a final judgment when the justice and mercy of God will decide the ultimate destiny of all beings. This sense of a linear history and of a moral responsibility for human behavior in society was to enter and transform both Western and Islamic civilizations.

The scientific-technological age was begun in the social and intellectual old order and in the unleashing of new creative energies. Even as the new transcends the old it bears much of it within as impetus for its further unfolding yet even when the old is reborn in the new the altered context changes its meaning and power.

The scientific-technological age emerges out of a western culture rooted in the biblical and the Greco-Roman traditions. Two major characteristics of that tradition dynamize this era: its historical vision and its human-centeredness. The former eventually becomes the myth of progress, the latter the subject served by that progress.

When the ancient Hebrews fought their way to possession of the Promised Land, they were a people without a cosmology. They had, however, a history. While the ancient civilizations of the Near East might be guided by the great cosmic gods these people claimed to be guided by a liberating deity. In fact it was not until after or during the Exile that their priests borrowing the structure of the Babylonian creation myth (the *Enuma Elish*) were able to give a cosmology to the people.

And in the experience of the return from exile they again were reminded that their God was primarily a savior. The ritual memory of the saving events of God and the hope for further interventions shaped the Jewish community in the *diaspora*.

For the Christians the saving event *par excellence* was Jesus Christ. All prior history led up to his salvific death and resurrection and all of future history awaits his return. In the meantime the elect are to be gathered from all corners of the earth by the proclamation of the "Good News."

History would come to an end with a period of a thousand years of peace.²⁰ During this time evil would be chained and the blessed happy. A final short battle would be ended with the Lamb's return. Heaven and earth would vanish. The dead would rise to be judged and a new Heaven and new earth created and the new Jerusalem come down from God. God "will wipe away all tears from their eyes; there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness. The world of the past has gone. Then the One sitting on the throne spoke: Now I am making the whole of creation new...I am the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End."²¹

This final vision of the Bible stands in a long tradition of a final Day of the Lord that goes back to the prophets. Similarly, Isaiah saw a new paradise where the lion would lay down with the lamb, and war would be no more.²²

Most of the Biblical "expectations" were born of a persecuted or threatened people who hoped in divine aid for their community. This vision of a God who is involved in history on the side of the elect guided the Western psyche even when God's "people" were not lacking power.

History is on the side of the good and, though there may be temporary setbacks, in the end there will be victory—total and vindicative. The idea that overzealous pursuit of the good could create evil was largely unacceptable in such a world. After all, the divine will had been revealed, divine support guaranteed and ultimate victory assured. The traditional Chinese concept of yin/yang, where pushing things too far leads to a reversal has rarely received a warm audience in the West. And so the bloody wars to secure the Promised Land (both of Canaan and North America), the Holy Wars, Crusades, Inquisitions. Hence, later, colonialism, manifest destiny, the "white man's burden," the Marxist Revolution, etc. And so the difficulty in accepting that a full-scale attack on the earth in the name of human good can end in human disaster.

Thus, even when human reason and technology replace God as determiner of history, the visionary energy for such transformation comes from faith and commitment to a myth largely inherited from a previous order. As Berry notes:

The archetypal support that remains most effective in modern consciousness is the paradisaical symbol of an existence that awaits man somewhere in the indefinite fu-

ture...this is the myth, the dream, the mystical vision at the basis of the entire scientific, industrial, urban-centered world of the twentieth century, although this mystical basis has not always been recognized. The foundations of the technological society are non-technological; they are interior and mystical.²³

The other cultural characteristic that has influenced this equation has been the transcendence of humans to the world. The overthrowing of the Medieval hierarchical universe was never completed. While God was dethroned as the ruler of nature and history, humans maintained their privileged status. Despite later implications of the evolutionary theory, the cultural bias favoring human transcendence proved too important to relinquish. Thus human genetic kinship with other beings and human descent from other life forms had little impact on Western anthropocentrism.

In addition, the locus of the dignity and value of the human in the West became the individual. He or she was the object of rights and privileges. In traditional societies the kinship group or family was the primary human organism with the individual deriving his or her identity and status from it. The attitudes, values and forms of behavior formed by and appropriate to such a situation encouraged organic, inclusive metaphors and symbols. Intersubjectivity was the normative context. The Chinese tradition was certainly humanistic. But in an ecological framework one could expand the inclusive qualities of the human rather than focus on its exclusive qualities.

The problem is not with an appreciation of the human but with the sense that the value of the human rests on the devaluation and devastation of nature. This type of anthropocentrism, dynamized by the myth of progress and enacted through the technological powers of the industrial age has placed the whole earth in extreme danger. Yet reversal is occurring. This whole cultural orientation is increasingly becoming counter-productive. While the clichés are still dutifully invoked at bill signings and dam openings, only the naive still believe in them. Yet this should be of little comfort to those who care for the future of the earth community. Unless the human community finds the vision and energy needed to build an

ecologically sound, humanely just and spiritually integrative future, a war over the spoils of the earth will ensue. Where do we begin?

We begin where all significant human undertakings begin, with a story:

It's all a question of story. We are in trouble now because we do not have a good story. We are in-between stories. The Old Story, the account of how the world

came to be and how we fit into it, is not functioning properly. We have not learned the New Story.²⁴

ECOLOGICAL SPIRITUALITY AND THE NEW STORY

Spirituality and cosmology must find their integration again but now on a global scale inclusive of the earth community. Functional cosmologies have always provided the normative context, the guiding and energizing story for human communities. A cosmology tells us what reality is, how reality has become what it is and how we must orient our lives and shape our hopes. Cosmology indicates where the sources of creativity and healing are and thus grounds our spirituality.

Traditional creation stories were largely mythic and symbolic in their style. The numinous beings and events they narrate not only established the cosmic order but also the human order as well. If anything was to function correctly it had to find its meaning and place through their story which established its archetypal model. Traditional cosmologies in addition to being mythic.

The development of an historical consciousness underlies and pervades most of contemporary thought. Geologists, biologists and astrophysicists have pieced together over the last century the main outline of a new understanding of the universe. This new cosmology forms the basis for the education of the world's children in nearly all sectors of the globe. With it we have a new story of what it is to be human and how our species emerged out of this developmental universe.²⁵

Yet as currently enunciated this story is inadequate because it only presents the physical dimension of this process. The human and spiritual dimensions are absent in this larger context. The development of the human is not yet seen as a phase of and integral with this larger cosmic-earth development.²⁶

Consequently, the earth community remains an objective value-less reality subject to the interests of the human community. People fall back on their religious or humanistic traditions for their orientation and, as we have seen, these still function in a human-centered context.

The first thing we must do, then, according to Berry is to realize that this larger process is spiritual-psychic as well as material-physical. It is one piece from beginning to end and the human species is integral with it. Not only has the human body its origin in the primordial atoms so does mind and

spirit; not only has the human body been shaped by this fifteen billion year process but its spiritualities as well.²⁷

Furthermore, in that "ultimate mystery whence all things emerge into being"²⁸ resides not only in our own numinous depths but in the depths of all beings, in intimate communion with the emerging cosmos.

The universe is not a great chain of being where the different levels of the universe are related "externally" through an imposed hierarchy. The universe, having the qualities of self-transcendence and self-organization, creates its own levels of being. Later levels of being emerge out of, depend on and enclose within them earlier levels. Or, as Berry says, "each new level of being emerges through the urgency of self-transcendence."²⁹

Self-transcendence is essential to any spiritual journey. We experience to the "more" in existence by reaching beyond, what we are to become "more." A greater participation in being and a greater fullness of being are the result of such growth.

Berry points to three basic laws or principles operative at each level of the universe and throughout its temporal unfolding: differentiation, subjectivity, and communion. "These laws identify the reality, the values of the universe and the directions in which the universe is proceeding."³⁰

Differentiation constitutes the most obvious and observable quality of the universe. The universe soon began differentiating itself into subatomic particles and atoms which grew in variety amidst the great galactic systems. Creative processes, formed in the stars, brought about and increased the different elements. Different planets with their satellites spun out around the sun. And the earth continued this differentiation process through life and evolution. The earth is the most internally differentiated yet unitive reality we are aware of.³¹ Among human beings, as well as among their cultures and their phases of history one finds this differentiation proceeding.

While the universe and the earth produced great variety throughout time and place the human order must continue this creativity in a more deliberative fashion. A human individual must *become* a person a culture must invent and adapt its symbol systems, a social or economic program must be changed; history at least in this age must find its creative energy and wisdom to proceed.

The second principle of the new cosmological paradigm, which by the way must also be activated appropriately by the human within a global context—is *subjectivity*. Berry refers to a being's subjectivity also by "interiority," "radiant form," "intelligibility," "mystery," "consciousness," "self." This is the sacred or numinous aspect of a being which commands reverence.³²

We in the modern world have lost this sense for the numinous depths of our own interiority as well as that of reality.

It is not simply a matter of respecting this species or that or of drawing lines around our ethical concerns based on some specific neurological complexity. "To deprive any being of this sacred quality is to disrupt the total order of the universe. Reverence will be total or it will not be at all. The universe does not come to us in pieces any more than a human individual stands before us with some part of his being."³³

However, no being has absolute value. Since the universe is one in its spatial extension as well as temporal unfolding, absolute value resides in the totality and not in one being, one kind of being, or one phase of the process.³⁴ Value arising from subjectivity must be completed by the value arising from communion and differentiation.

The analytical method which tries to understand how a whole functions by breaking it down into its parts is based on a mechanistic and atomistic view of reality. It might work well with a car or a machine where order and organization are imposed on it from without. Such machines demand constant attention with a large input of energy and matter to keep entropy at bay. They tend to fall apart. The universe, however, and beings at all levels of complexity display an inner organizing, perpetuating and even self-transcending ability. This negentropic development of the universe is too often developed. The inner aspect of a being is lost by analysis, and can only be recovered when the analyzer recovers his or her own inner life and brings it into the encounter. The lack of spirituality is not in the object but in the knowing subject and its relationship to the other.

Even of more significance in Berry's thought is his suggestion that "the human" is not merely a being on the earth but a dimension of the earth and ultimately of the universe. For Berry, the human is that being in whom the universe reflects on itself or knows itself in reflexive consciousness. Thus, insofar as consciousness is found as a dimension of all beings all the way back to the primordial atoms, then the human can recognize itself in the universe and the universe can recognize itself in the human. This is the basis for a new realization of the Cosmic Person.

Louise Young in her own way raises this possibility:

Consciousness is the central experience of life, and many people have assumed that it is unique to human beings. But animals appear to share this trait to some degree. A dog knows its name and responds when it is called. Most significantly, the dog acts to protect itself; so do a cen-

tipede and an anemone. Even the elementary forms of matter act in a manner which extends their own existence in time. Surely self-preservation would not be possible without a *sense of self*. Perhaps consciousness, like integration and the ability to act, is present (in a very rudimentary sense) even in the most fundamental organisms...As Form continuously increases, encompassing larger and larger segments of the cosmos, the self becomes greater, the many become one. And through this creative process the universe is being conscious of itself.³⁵

Hence one must ask whether anthropocentrism is not the most dehumanizing of all possible visions. For in denying value and consciousness to other beings it diminishes the human which it purportedly exalts. Humanness becomes synonymous with surface conformity in a world of technical power, production and scientific ingenuity economic consumption, political status within alienated "leaps" of or, at the often extreme, existential rebellion and religious faith. The idea that being human is first and foremost a way of being the universe and the earth in their depths hardly rises.

Communion is the third and, for our times, most important norm of the universe. The number and kinds of relationships within the universe are nearly infinite. Without communion there is no differentiation for without communion there is no context to give shape to identity. If the universe is a process of deepening differentiation and subjectivity it is also a process of deepening communion on all levels of reality.

The communion of four hydrogen atoms gives rise to the more complex helium atom; the even more intense communion of matter on the earth enables life to emerge. The resultant living form is more differentiated, with greater subjectivity and more intensive communion within itself and with its environment." Finally, it is the intense complexity and communion within the living form that allows for human self-reflective consciousness. Communion among humans shapes the cultural processes of history.

Following a period of differentiation from the earth process, the human must now enter into a communion phase with the earth community. Such an experience will be similar to the primordial ecological experience of the tribal-shamanic phase but take place in a critical, post-industrial, and global context. It will also include a communion of past with future wherein the achievements of prior cultural traditions find a mutually fulfilling context.

ECO-SPIRITUALITY: MICROCOSM AND MACROCOSM

Since ecological spirituality will provide a matrix within which many traditions and individuals can move into their macrophase, the ways of spiritual transformation will vary. What will be common, however, is a developed sensitivity to the cosmic-earth-human journey. Like a branch on the tree of life we must open ourselves to the growth stimulus from within as well as to the warmth and light that draws us through our vision into the future.

Let us look at three aspects of global ecological spirituality and how they might shape the individual. First, as the tribal-shamanic tradition taught, we are made for kinship with the earth community. This kinship is rooted in our genetic coding which connects us with all living beings.

The activation of our possibilities for concrete relationships with other living and with non-living realities, varies dependent on time and place. Even when direct contact with animals, forests, seas and mountains is not possible, one can still extend one's ecological identity and overcome the ego-reflex that is so much a part of anthropocentric experience. For one's body is a microcosm both of the evolutionary process and of the variety of beings who are reflected in one's anatomical form, biological functioning and chemical constitution.

When simply walking on the earth, one's feet can remember the support of Mother Earth and awaken the reverence due her. When filling one's lungs with air, one is being blessed by the spirit of life. When exhaling, one should freely pour out one's own being for the earth's welfare through the atmosphere. When washing or drinking, one can feel the cleansing and renewing powers of the earth in sister water. The touch of the sun's warmth on one's skin can bring to mind the creative forces of the original fireball and of brother sun as well as the transformative powers in trial and pain. The wood of trees seen along the street or even touched on one's furniture, can put us in the presence of all green growing things which support multitudes by their photosynthetic genius. One could extend this list almost indefinitely, for so many opportunities present themselves for such meditations. The universe is present to us in so many immediate and intimate ways that the wonder is that we miss so much.

A second aspect of eco-spirituality is the establishment of the new human identity, the new Cosmic Person. The universe not only comes to me in such an intimate way spatially, but it also comes to me and abides in me

temporally. My autobiography only differs from yours in the last infinitesimal moment of time. This bubble that is my identity rests on the ocean's current and depths. One can enter into the depths of time through the depths of one's own space. The genetic coding draws me back into the labyrinth of moving, squirming, oozing, swimming, flying critters. The chemical bonds fling me into the ancient oceans and volcanic fires. My atoms swing me out across the galaxies, back through their early formations the primordial atomic particles emerging from the fireball. And in the silent depths where moves not energy or matter, before the Word, yet here/now within my emptiness, I sense the numinous reality that the mystics fell into and out of.

Drawing back into being from non-being, I draw back from the fire the energy, the matter, the life, the consciousness, the awakening "I", finally resting in my own moment which is no-moment and my own identity which is no-identity. Or, the identity of the fireball now meditating across the eons on its own incredible journey and awakening to the numinous mystery that birthed it and nurtures every Now. Through the shaman, the sun and stars see themselves, the earth sinks into the feel of itself, the human ponders the thought of itself. What wonders the universe has revealed to us in these days that we might feel the weight and yet joy of our cosmic identity.

Thirdly, eco-spirituality teaches us what the Taoist sages knew, that we can only respond to the dynamics of the earth by getting in touch with our bodily spontaneities. The spontaneous flow of life, its self-regulating patterns of action and reaction, stimulus and response, movement and rest, attack and retreat, allurements and surrender—all are experienced before they are ever measured. Ecosystems do not consult ecologists before they function, flowers do not seek botanists' manuals before taking on color and form, stars owe no astronomer their fiery explosions, Bach consults no musicologist for rules of fugue-composition, children need no psychologist to instruct them on play, and societies hire no sociologist to plan their emergence.

The Taoists were right. Overplanning, over complexification, ultrarationality, willful effort—all use a tremendous amount of energy and bring forth relatively little. The universe moves itself effortlessly, spontaneously. And yet, the trial-and-error, the creative solutions, bear witness to an artistic process at work. Human creativity participates in this cosmic process and the great "visions" and revelations central to cultural development have their source in the numinous depths of the psyche. At this level the same guiding forces manifest in the universe touch the human.³⁶

Yet history also shows that these impulses need timing as well as appropriate vehicles for effectiveness. For example, Bach's skills were equal to the task of expressing his creative energies. Both were necessary. The cosmic rightness of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony resides in its disciplined creativity, its ascetic exuberance. The dance of Baryshnikov, the backhand of Boris Becker, the calligraphy of Zen—all display effortless effort, passive activity, playful seriousness.

In the final analysis, the only thing needed to bring about the ecological age is dance. Yet for this dance to "happen," the bone structures, muscles, lungs, and limbs must be able to respond to the music and the rhythm. If we simply decide to "let go" now, we would crash to the floor for we cannot escape our historically conditioned "body." Spiritual vision, no matter how clear, spiritual energy, no matter how intense, spiritual motives, no matter how pure, cannot bring health without the body. Not just the microcosmic body of flesh and blood, and not just the macrocosmic body of earth and water, but the body of the mesocosm, the social body. And so Confucius was right and the Indo-European priests were right.

ECO-SPIRITUALITY: A NEW MESOCOSM

If we are to turn the long death march of the industrial warriors into a dance with the earth we must work to liberate all people whose own dance is crippled by the many oppressive forces at work in the contemporary world. Because of its nature ecological spirituality only reaches its fullness as all beings reach their fullness together, human and non-human.

The macrocosm and the microcosm will only be integrated if the social mesocosm is reformed. As becomes more evident each day, issues of economic justice and ecological health are inextricably linked. We will never assure one without the other. Our vision will never be adequate or profound enough if it ignores one and focuses only on the other.

Because of complex historical changes in the sociopolitical and economic realms, the traditional role of religion in articulating a myth that combines microcosm (human individual), mesocosm (sociopolitical order) and macrocosm (natural order) has all but disappeared. In most parts of the world, religious institutions function alongside of and separate from political and economic institutions. Even political decision-making today is based less on ideology and more on economic and technological pressures.

Criticism of the de-humanizing effects of the modern technocracy finds humanists and religionists joining forces. The cultural realm of intellectual, aesthetic and moral values seems increasingly at odds with the "values"

manifested through technological and economic processes. While such protests in the name of the human spirit are important, they frequently take their stand in the "classical" tradition. Hence, they are frequently dismissed by the myth makers of the modern world as nostalgic yearnings for "the good old days." Attention is drawn to the "progress" made by the "hard headed" realists who have been transforming nature so as to make it serve the material comforts and necessities of all the people.

When humanists and religionists do note the environmental degradation accompanying such "progress," they do so in a manner that tends to treat the environment as just one more human concern among others. Thus, trade-offs are always possible and nature as "recreational" space can always be negotiated away in the interests of more housing, highways, landfills, industrial parks. While some traditionalists even recognize that the same social forces that threaten the human spirit also threaten the integrity of nature, their own intellectual framework makes effective critique or challenge impossible. For it is precisely their concentration of value and spirituality in humanity in contrast with the valueless materiality of creation that is the problem. Since the apologists of political, economic and technological power structures share this basic framework they can mystify and cloak their own self-serving actions by pleas to *human* progress or property rights and *democratic* values.

Claims based on the sacrality of the human insofar as they lack an ecocentric perspective are inherently self-serving and thus play into the hands of those institutions which claim to serve the betterment of humankind. Repressive economic and social forces can continue to thrive as long as they can pit social justice advocates against environmentalists and ecologists. Hence, there is a need to recognize that the sacrality of the human emerges out of and is integral with the sacrality of the earth and that human development cannot be properly defined or successfully implemented unless that development is made integral with the ongoing development of the biosphere.³⁷ The degradation and destruction of the earth process means the degradation and destruction of the human process, both materially and spiritually. Thus, changes in the mesocosm, including changes in its mythic and ideological articulation, should be geared toward bringing into a creative and mutually-enhancing relationship, both the microcosm and the macrocosm, or, in historical terms, the microphase and the macrophase of the human.

Hence a personal spirituality which lacks an ecological and cosmic vision even when it includes an "appreciation" for nature, may unwittingly conspire in nature's undoing. At best such a spirituality, humanist or religious, may

function as a protest against the demonic aspects of the human but since it is not sensitized to the wider spiritual-material forces at work drawing our world into a new unitive phase, it cannot play a creative, visionary role. It cannot speak to those who see too well that everything has changed in the last two hundred years of the scientific-technological revolution, and who, despite their own myopic vision of the future, are nonetheless shaping it.

The fact is that we will have a common future or we will have no future at all. It is within that movement toward a common future of the human and non-human, past and present, North and South that the new common spirituality is emerging and toward which it must be responsive.

Around the world, seeds of the Ecological Age have been planted. Through the efforts of thousands of organizations, we are beginning to see a network of roots spreading around the world. One needs only mention the Green Movement, the Appropriate/Alternative Technology Movement, the Bioregional Movement and similar grass-roots attempts to alter the way the industrial state pretends at development. There are the animal rights and animal welfare organizations that seek to halt the terrible violence done on factory farms and in research centers to other living beings. There are the confrontational groups such as Earth First! and Greenpeace as well as more mainstream groups struggling to preserve habitat and species around the world. Important are eco-feminism, deep ecology, eco-philosophy and others who challenge the prevalent worldview and its value system. In addition are the new ecological groups associated with the world's religions who are trying to reform their own traditions and counter the powerful forces often using religion for their own purposes. Of special note is Survival International which works to save the remaining tribal cultures which bear witness to a profound ecological spirituality.

Liberation theologies and movements are becoming more aware of the ecological basis for any new society as well as of the need for a deep spiritual element in grassroots revolutions. Rooted in the prophetic tradition of the Bible and in the socialist visions of the nineteenth century, these liberation movements bring the power of that tradition into a modern context. Once linked to the dynamics of the earth-human process, such largely Third World movements can play a crucial role in shaping a global ecological spirituality.

Conclusion

We live in an age where the Cosmic Person has been dismembered *both* in its macrocosmic and microcosmic forms. Sacrifice in the traditional myths was a cycle where the death of one form led to the birth of the other. Our

knowledge of linear history permits us no such vision. The dismembering of the earth will lead to human death and human collapse will lead to earth death.

We need no more dismembering but a remembering. A remembering of our origin in the stars and the galaxies, in the fertile earth and the primordial seas. A remembering of the numinous depths of our own being and of the earth which gave us birth. A remembering of Chief Seattle and the Great Mother, of the Cosmic Person and of the promise of Wang Yang-Ming. A remembering of the compassionate Buddha and of the god who died on a tree. A remembering of the mystic's burning love and of the prophet's burning for justice.

Once we have remembered the earth and one another the earth will remember us and renew our hearts.

NOTES

1. "Building the Earth," *Riverdale Papers*. Vol. 1 (Riverdale, N.Y.: Riverdale Center for Religious Research, n.d.), pp. 6-7. The *Riverdale Papers* series is paginated within each paper but not throughout the volume. Hence the page number refers only to the paper in question.
2. "Twelve Principles," *Riverdale Papers: On the Earth Community* (Riverdale: Riverdale Center, n.d.), p. 2.
3. *Ibid.*
4. "The Ecological Age," *Riverdale Papers: On the Earth Community* (Riverdale, N.Y.: Riverdale Center, n.d.), p. 5.
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11. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 121.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 164-165.
17. The most genuine of Confucius' teachings are found in *The Analects*. Important for our context is *The Great Learning and Doctrine of the Mean*.

18. William T. DeBary, *Sources of the Chinese Tradition*. Vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), pp. 516-518.
19. My summary of Taoist teachings is based on Lao Tzu's *Tao te Ching* and Chuang Tzu, *The Chuang Tzu*.
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22. Isaiah 11.
23. "Creative Energy," *The Riverdale Papers*. Vol. 1 (Riverdale, N.Y.: Riverdale Center, n.d.), p. 7.
24. Thomas Berry, "The New Story," *Riverdale Papers: On the Earth Community* (Riverdale, N.Y.: Riverdale Center, n.d.), p. 1.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
27. "Classical Western Spirituality and the American Experience," *The Riverdale Papers: On the Earth Community* (Riverdale, N.Y.: Riverdale Center, n.d.), pp. 12-13.
28. "Twelve Principles," op. cit., p. 1.
29. "The New Story," op. cit., p. 13.
30. Thomas Berry, "Twelve Principles for Reflecting on the Universe," *Cross Currents*. Vol. XXXVII, Nos. 2-3, p. 216.
31. Thomas Berry, "The Ecological Age," *The Riverdale Papers: On the Earth Community* (Riverdale, N.Y.: Riverdale Center, n.d.), p. 13.
32. "The New Story," op. cit., p. 17.
33. *Ibid.*
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35. Louise Young, *The Unfinished Universe* (N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1986), pp. 148-149.
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The Way Of Ecopiety: Confucianism, Taoism, and Zen Buddhism

Hwa Yol Jung

The state may fall, but the hills and streams remain.
- Tu Fu

The problem of Nature is the problem of human life.
- Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki

It [Tao] was born before Heaven and Earth, and yet you cannot say it has been there for long; it is earlier than the earliest time, and yet you cannot call it old.
- Chuang Tzu

INTRODUCTION

We are at the edge of ecological catastrophe—a catastrophe that is silent and invisible but imminent and deep. The Canadian sociologist John O'Neill sums up the deep magnitude of our present ecological predicament when he quipped that ours may be the first civilization which thinks of itself as the last.¹ The present fate of man is moribund because he has increasingly become tone-deaf to his environment, his earthly and natural habitat.

In 1972, the first report of the Club of Rome, *The Limits to Growth*,² issued the gloomy or, according to some of its critics, "doomsday" forecast on the human prospect and called for a "Copernican revolution of the mind" in order to ensure humanity's future in the climate of accelerating industrialization, rapid population growth, widespread malnutrition, depletion of non-renewable resources, and a deteriorating environment. Two years later, in